

EMERGENCY AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE



Aircraft Certification Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

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DATE: May 9, 2002
AD #: 2002-09-51

Send to all U.S. owners and operators of Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (Bell) Model 204B, 205A, A-1, and B helicopters.

This superseding Emergency Airworthiness Directive (EAD) is prompted by information from the manufacturer that the Bell Model 204B helicopter should be added to the applicability of EAD 2002-08-53. Also, this EAD clarifies the instructions for inspecting the affected tail rotor (T/R) grip. In addition, this EAD corrects the statement in the preamble to the current EAD that T/R grip, part number (P/N) 205-011-711-101, has an unlimited life. That T/R grip has a life limit of 2,500 hours time-in-service. The current EAD was prompted by reports of timed-out, T/R grips, P/N 204-011-728-019, being improperly re-identified and reinstalled. According to reports, T/R grips, P/N 204-011-728-019, removed from service as required by AD 73-17-04 (38 FR 22223, August 17, 1973), were re-marked as P/N 205-011-711-101 and may have been installed on Bell Model 204 and 205 helicopters. This unsafe condition, if not detected, could result in failure of the T/R grip and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The FAA issued EAD 2002-08-53 on April 22, 2002, to require cleaning the affected T/R grip and inspecting it with a magnet to determine if it is made of steel. If it is not made of steel, the current EAD requires replacing the unairworthy T/R grip with an airworthy T/R grip.

This unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of these same type designs. This EAD retains the requirements specified in the current EAD. In addition, we added the Bell Model 204B helicopter to the applicability. Also, this EAD clarifies the inspection requirements by specifying that the magnet be placed on the T/R grip body and not on the steel bushing or steel interior liner to determine if the grip is made of steel.

This rule is issued under 49 U.S.C. Section 44701 pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, and is effective immediately upon receipt of this emergency airworthiness directive.

2002-09-51 BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON INC.: Docket No. 2002-SW-24-AD. Supersedes Emergency AD 2002-08-53, Docket No. 2002-SW-23-AD.

Applicability: Model 204B, 205A, A-1, and B helicopters, with tail rotor (T/R) grip, part number (P/N) 205-011-711-101, installed, certificated in any category.

Note 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD. The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required before further flight, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent failure of the T/R grip and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Clean the T/R grip.

(b) Determine if the T/R grip is made of steel by placing a magnet on the exterior of the main body of the T/R grip. Do not make this determination by placing the magnet on the steel bushing or steel interior liner. If the main body of the T/R grip is not made of steel, replace it with an airworthy steel T/R grip. Only replacement T/R grips made of steel are eligible for installation.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification Office, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Rotorcraft Certification Office.

Note 2: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Rotorcraft Certification Office.

(d) Special flight permits may be issued in accordance with 14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199 to operate the helicopter to a location where the requirements of this AD can be accomplished.

(e) **Emergency AD 2002-09-51, issued May 9, 2002, becomes effective upon receipt.**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kennedy Jones, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Rotorcraft Certification Office, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0170, telephone (817) 222-5148, fax (817) 222-5783.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 9, 2002.

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